

OUR LITTLE CANADIAN COUSIN OF THE GREAT NORTHWEST



EMILY • F • MURPHY
"JANEY CANUCK"



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Our Little Canadian Cousin of the Great Northwest

THE Little Cousin Series

(TRADE MARK)

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AND OTHERS

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THE PAGE COMPANY

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“ALL THE FAMILY WENT TO GATHER THE TREE.”
(See page 81)

Our Little Canadian Cousin of the Great Northwest

By
Emily F. Murphy
(*"JANEY CANUCK"*)

Illustrated by
Thelma Gooch



Boston
L. C. Page & Company
(INCORPORATED)

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MURPHY, E.

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PREFACE

THE three Provinces of North-West Canada referred to in this volume are Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. These include an area of 862,972 square miles and originally formed a part of Rupert's Land.

In 1670, Charles II of England granted to certain traders a charter of incorporation to "the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England, trading into Hudson Bay." To these traders, this gave not only a monopoly, but a proprietorship of all the region drained by the rivers flowing into Hudson Bay. In return the traders were required annually to give the King, or his heirs, two black beavers and two elks as an acknowledgment of his suzerainty.

The motto of this trading company was *Pro pelle cutem*, "a skin for a skin."

Two hundred years later, in 1870, the Province of Manitoba was created from land bought by the Canadian Government of this Hudson's Bay Company and, in the year 1905, Alberta and Saskatchewan were also constituted to be Provinces.

These three wide and wonderful Provinces combine a great variety of scenery and wealth of resources, and have drawn from all countries in the world for their population. This Canadian Northwest may be truly called "the Child of the Nations," embracing among its citizens—as it does—some thirty different nationalities.

The original inhabitants, the Indians, were divided into different tribes but by reason of their inter-tribal warfare became greatly decreased in numbers. When the buffalo disappeared with the coming of the white man, the Indians were still further decimated, the remnants of the tribes now living on Indian

Reserves under the care of government agents.

Great transcontinental railways have opened this enormous area to the world so that our little Canadian cousins of these great Provinces are not so isolated as they used to be, and may now enjoy the same privileges as their cousins of Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and the Maritime Provinces. It is of these privileges, with the history, sport and home life of the country that we would talk.

Because the climate is cold for about seven months of the year, the home means more to Northern folk than to others. It stands for warmth, shelter, color, love. Here, we speak of home as "a nest," and of all our similes this seems the most appropriate.

In these regions we cannot understand an indifference to home, a fact that has been well-noted by one of our Saxon poets:—

"Oh tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North!
Oh tell her, Swallow, that the brood is flown,
Say that I do but wanton in the South,
But, in the North, long since, *my nest is made.*"

It is of this, in particular, that we would tell
you.

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Our Little Canadian Cousin of the Great Northwest

CHAPTER I

THE TWINS

IT was Empire Day in Canada, that is to say the 24th of May, when Betty and Billy Maynard were to say good-by to their father, Colonel Maynard, who had been ordered overseas to fight with the allied forces in the great World War.

The twins — for such they were — had heard and read of war before, but a war that was to take their father away was something different, and they were trying very hard to be brave like Mother and not to show how unhappy they felt.

"There's a big knot in my throat," said

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Betty despairingly, "and my voice can hardly get through it. I don't think it would matter if I cried *just a little, ever so little*. Do you think it would, Billy?"

"Don't you do it, or I'll — I'll — I'll never speak to you again," remarked her twin with apparently a bigger knot in his throat. "Girls are cry babies anyway. And, oh Betty, do you mind what Uncle Bob said last week when he was in town? He said if you cried and made it hard for soldiers to go to war, you were 'showing the white feather,' and maybe you were a coward too."

"I'll tell you what we can do," answered Betty, "I have only thought of it this very minute. We will get Mother to write to the King in England to let Daddy stay at home with us."

"Don't be a goose," said Billy with the full dignity of his eleven years — eleven next birthday, you understand — "don't you know that Daddy is a soldier like the one in the song;

'And when we say we've always won,
And when they ask us how it's done:
We will proudly point to every one
Of England's Soldiers of the King.' "

"It's you that are silly, putting your stomach out instead of your chest. Huh! soldiers never march like that. Besides, Father is a *Canadian* soldier of the King."

If Mrs. Maynard had not joined them at this moment, there is no telling what might have happened for even through its coat of tan, Billy's face was flushed with wrath because of the slur which his twin had placed upon, what he was pleased to consider, a fine soldierly bearing.

When Mrs. Maynard had heard both sides of the story, she drew the children to her and explained patiently how Canada and its Provinces were a part of a great group of nations called an Empire and that London, England, was their capital city. It would not be possible

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for her to write a letter as Betty had planned, for all strong young men of the Empire whether their faces were black, white, red or yellow were called to serve under the flag so that they might save their country from being taken by hostile nations.

"But why cannot the soldiers fight in Winnipeg, instead of going over the ocean?" queried the girl. "Don't we ever have war in Canada?"

"God forbid we should," replied her mother with a tremor in her voice. "It is a hundred years and more, that we have been at peace. This is because we have such friendly neighbors to the South of us in the United States of America. In that country, the people speak our language and most of them are of British stock like ourselves. This is why we have no soldiers or forts on our long boundary line, — over three thousand miles long, and why we have remained as brothers of one family.

"Although there have been no regular soldiers in the Northwest Provinces, we used to have numerous forts which were built along our rivers or on our great lakes."

"Oh yes! I know about those," said Billy. "Daddy told me that Fort Garry is now Winnipeg, and the capital city of the Province of Manitoba. He told me, too, how Main Street used to be an Indian trail, and this is why it twists with the River. One Indian would walk ahead of the other and whenever there was a soft piece of ground or a bunch of trees, the Indian walked around it and made a crooked path."

"But Mother," said Betty, who although thought to be a little girl, was really a walking interrogation mark, "if there were no soldiers here, why was Winnipeg called 'Fort Garry'? Doesn't a fort always have soldiers?"

"Not always, Dearie! When the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company—or

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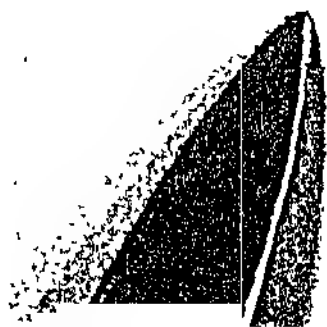
as they were called in their Royal Charter, 'the Gentleman Adventurers' — traded with the Indians, they built high wooden walls to keep the Indians from raiding the place, or from killing them.

"There are a number of these old trading forts in the Northwest Provinces, although, of course, they are not used now and the Indians are more civilized and fewer in numbers."

"Oh yes! there is a fine story about one of these forts in our history but I cannot pronounce its name," ejaculated Billy. "It is about some Indians who invited the men out of the walls to play lacrosse, and then they threw a ball into the fort and ran in after it."

"The name of the fort was Michilimackinac," said Mrs. Maynard. "It is quite a long word for you, Sonny."

"Yes, and when the Indians got inside, they drew their knives and scalped all the white men."



"But where did the Indians get money to buy things when there were no banks?" asked Betty who had a savings bank account of her own and was the proud possessor of twenty-eight dollars, and eleven cents. "How could they buy things, Mother?"

"The Indians used to pay for cloth, and fishing hooks and tea and tobacco with the skins of animals which they had trapped. These skins were called 'made beaver,' and this is the meaning of the motto of the Hudson's Bay Company, 'A skin for a skin.'"

"Nowadays, the Indians live on land called Reserves which they work under the care of government agents. In the Provinces, we have no trouble with them, and some of the men in your father's battalion, which leaves to-day, are splendid young redmen who are going to fight for Canada."

"But tell us mother, are the Indian tribes Canadians, just like us?"

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"Yes, Betty; they are the first Canadians but there is really no race of little Canadian Cousins, like the little Italian or French Cousins. Daddy was once an *English Cousin*; I was an *American Cousin*, while you and Billy are little *Canadian Cousins*."

It was afternoon of the same day when a soldier in uniform drove to their house and took Mrs. Maynard and the children in a big car to the armories, where the men of their father's battalion mustered, preparatory to entraining for the long journey to Quebec, from whence they would sail for England.

Daddy had said good-by' to them the night before and had told Billy how he was the man of the house now, and was always to think first of Mother and Betty.

And he said other things that Billy was never to speak of unless Daddy did not come home again, but which he was never to forget for a moment.



"DADDY HAD SAID GOOD-BY TO THEM THE NIGHT BEFORE."

When they reached the armories, the battalion had already formed up with Colonel Maynard at the head of the men, looking very brave and handsome.

The Lieutenant-Governor of the Province was there too, and many other persons of importance. Billy and Betty had seen the Governor before, when, as the representative of the King, he went with an escort of soldiers to open Parliament, and they had been greatly impressed with his cocked hat and Windsor uniform that was heavy with gold braid. They were disappointed that he did not wear it on this occasion and looked just like the men whom Uncle Bob called "civvies." It was splendid to hear the bands play, and to see the soldiers marching past with their officer riding ahead. The children clapped their hands with delight and shouted as their father saluted their mother and passed on. Surely they were proud of him and of his men. They

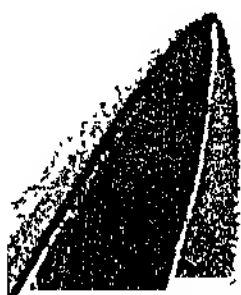
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remembered how mother said these young soldiers came from all parts of the Province and that among them were miners, lawyers, university students, farmers, clerks, doctors, railway men, and surveyors. All the men wore maple leaves in bronze, this being the national emblem of Canada.

Although the maple tree does not grow in Manitoba, the children knew several songs concerning it, as do all Canadian children. Only the week before, they had learned one to recite to their father before he went away, and which they both remembered now.

And when her leaves, all crimson,—
Droop silently and fall,
Like drops of lifeblood welling
From a warrior brave and tall,
They tell how fast and freely
Would her children's blood be shed,
Ere the soil of our faith and freedom
Should echo a foeman's tread.

Then hail to the broad-leaved Maple,
With her fair and changeful dress!



A type of our youthful country
In its pride and loveliness.
Whether in spring or summer,
Or in the dreary fall,
'Mid Nature's forest children
She's fairest of them all.

CHAPTER II

THE JOURNEY TO THE FARM

NEXT to having guardian angels there is nothing finer than a Grandfather and a Grandmother — and even then, the matter is open to question. At least, this was what the twins thought when Mrs. Maynard read them a letter she had received the week following their father's departure. This letter was from their grandparents who lived on a farm near Regina, the capital city of the Province of Saskatchewan, and on which farm they were all invited to spend the summer, or longer if they felt like it.

The immediate prospects of leaving the hot pavements of the city, and of having ponies to ride, filled the children with so great an excitement they could hardly exist through the closing

days of the school term or settle down to anything so drab and uninteresting as examinations. Still, they did not do badly after all, being able to send their father a report showing how William and Elizabeth Maynard (this is to say Billy and Betty) stood third and fifth respectively in their class.

It had always been a trouble to the twins that they could not dress alike, as if both had been boys; but in summer time in the country the little girls and, indeed, the grown women often wear knickerbockers or riding breeches, so that they may enjoy the benefit of outdoor life the same as the male members of the family, without any one saying "Tomboy!" or "Copy-cat!"

Betty's trousers were made in bloomer-fashion and her upper garments of the style known as "middies," that is to say, exactly after the pattern of those worn by sailors. Uncle Bob said these were "just the thing,"

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and he also said she must ride her pony astride. He contended that a girl who rode a horse sidewise, looked like a heap of clothes hanging on to a clothes-peg, and likely to fall off at any minute.

It was at full wheat-tide when they left Winnipeg and passed out across the plains of Manitoba. Everywhere, the great-reaping machines were cutting the grain, while the men followed behind piling the sheaves into stocks. In some places the grain was being hauled from the threshing machines to the huge tin granaries called elevators, from which it would be carried to the mills, or down to the Atlantic or Pacific seaboards for shipment to Europe and Asia.

Sometimes, they passed through sweet-smelling hay-meadows over which the wind swept, making a sight long to be remembered.

The Scotch conductor on the pullman car, a large happy looking man, stayed awhile to

talk to the children and to answer the questions with which they plied him. He also taught them a song about the wheat, and made sure they had it correctly so they could write it to their Daddy:—

There's nothing half sae bonny,
There's nothing half sae grand,
As the sunlight on the wheatfields
In the bonny prairie land.

The conductor did not know the length of this railroad but he said it was all day long, and then several days after that. He also told them that he knew the land by heart and could say it backwards.

The train on which they rode was called "an express" because it was more expressly for travelers and so did not stop at every station for freight, and their coach was called "a pull-man." "Does this mean that it should only pull men? Why shouldn't it pull women too?" asked Betty, who, since putting on knicker-

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bockers, had shown a strong leaning towards women's rights.

"They are called pullmans after Mr. Pullman, who first built the cars," explained the conductor, "and are cars where people can sleep in beds, have dressing-rooms, and get meals at almost any hour.

"When the trains first crossed these provinces, we had no observation cars with big windows, writing desks, and magazines such as we have now. Neither were new bulletins posted up for the travelers giving the telegraphic news of the world for the day. The two great transcontinental railways in Canada — those which cross from ocean to ocean — are the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National, the latter being owned and managed by the Government.

"These railways have great lines of steamships, too, so that when the *Little Cousins* in Europe or Asia come to the North-West

Provinces of Canada, they nearly always travel by one of these routes."

In the morning when the children awoke they were passing through the second of the Great Northwestern Provinces, that is to say Saskatchewan.

There were no trees in sight except those which had been planted around the snug little farm houses, the barns and the stables.

"I don't think much of the prairies," said Billy, "for there are no stones to throw at things."

"Neither do I," replied his twin, "for there is no place from which to dangle your feet."

But if there were no trees or stones, Billy and Betty declared they had never seen anything like the sun on the far horizon line which seemed to come straight out of the earth, and looked like a great red poppy blossoming in the sky.

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As they passed close by the farms or villages, the boys and girls, after the habit of the country — and a fine habit it is too — waved a friendly greeting to the travelers, which greeting the twins returned with much delight.

These little villages are usually called after some famous man, or after that village in Great Britain, Europe or the United States from which the settlers came. Nearly all of the villages have a hotel, a post office, a bank, a church, two or three stores and some houses while, here and there, was a small hospital.

The children argued as to which village they would prefer to reside in. Betty preferred those with hospitals for she had quite made up her mind to become a nurse and to wear a uniform, while Billy decided he wanted to live in a village with only one school, so that if anything happened to the building or to the

teacher, there was a likelihood of an almost unlimited holiday. Indeed, when he came to turn it over in his mind, Master William could not think it possible that any normal boy could ever want to live in the city, where there was a school in nearly every street, and where there might be dozens or even hundreds of teachers.

Once, they caught sight of a strange animal with a slender body, a long, long neck and tiny hoofs. As it bounded lightly and gracefully over the plains, the children thought they had never seen anything half so beautiful.

"Dat sho' am some antelope," exclaimed the black porter in the white coat who halted in his work to see the sight. "Dat goat des drapped eroun' der train ter pass der time er day an' to let yo' see his color.

"Laws-a-massey, chillen, he's no slue-footed fellow, dat one; he jump dat snow fence quick as wink yo' eye.

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"Yassum, de antelope er dat awful curious, yo' des wave er flag an' up he comes right till yo' very hand.

"Next thing he knows, dat antelope, he sees seben stars square in the middle of the dáy, an' no use for heem ter kick or make der slightest objection."

It was Betty who first caught sight of the coyote, as he was slinking away in the distance. These animals, Mrs. Maynard explained, are small prairie wolves which, while not dangerous to people, are very destructive to sheep and barnyard fowl. In the winter the farmers hunt and kill them with the aid of wolfhounds, collecting a bounty from the government for their pelts. The coyotes bay the moon at night after the manner of dogs, except that they have a long blood-curdling howl at the end of their bark which makes the listener think of them as much-to-be-feared fellows, whereas they are only slinking, cowardly sneak-thieves. Any

Little Cousin with a toy gun could chase them across the plains.

Sometimes, when the train stopped to take on water for the engine, or to allow the passengers and train-men to get a luncheon, Billy and Betty would gather wild asters, goldenrod, black-eyed Susans and branches that shone purple-red with berries.

At one of these stations, they saw two members of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police who patrol that district to keep good order, and to give help wherever it is needed. These are the men who make life safe in the lonely parts of the country, and who are kind of brothers to all the people.

"Sure an' them's the boys as has 'beats' a hundred miles square," explained an Irish brakeman, who had rested from his labors on the edge of the station platform.

"It's them as knows who is 'hard up' and why; how many head of cattle a man does be

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after havin', and who is a thief. Sure an' they have an eye that never sleeps right in the middle of their forehead an' folks had better be mindin' their manners hereabout.

"Well, mebbe you're right about not being able to see that eye, little Miss, for it is kind of inside their head, y' mind.

" 'Riders of the Plains,' that what the folks call them and I have it set out in my notebook. Very well, gossoon (this to Billy), you can write it down for your Dad if you like, an' there'll be no charge to you neither."

There are things unguessed, there are tales untold,
in the life of the Great Lone Land,
But here is a fact that the prairie-bred alone may
understand,
That a thousand miles in the fastnesses the fear of
the law obtains,
And the pioneers of justice were the Riders of the
Plains.

In the same coach, there was a little girl from England who was called Victoria after a

great queen in that country, but this little visitor did not know so much about the country as Betty.

"O-ah, look at the big bath," exclaimed Victoria when they sighted a pond of water sometimes called a "pot hole," upon which floated a number of wild ducks that did not seem at all wild in spite of their name.

"Fool!" interrupted Boy Billy, "there are thousands and thousands of these. On Duck Day, every one shoots them, and father told me the farmers stored them away to eat in the winter. Maybe, Father is going to teach me to shoot too, with a gun all my own. He said that every boy in Canada ought to be taught to shoot, ride a horse, and tell the truth."

Victoria was also greatly excited about the saucy little gophers, sometimes called ground-squirrels, who sat up and gaped at the train or who darted suddenly into their holes, waving their tails in the air as they went.

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"I think they look like surveyors' pegs," said Betty, "they stand so still, and they are the same yellow color."

"Once the government offered a bounty in money for their tails," explained a district nurse, who had been listening to their conversation, "for the gophers ate a lot of the farmers' grain, but the government had to withdraw this bounty because some of the people cut off the tails and let the gophers go free to rear other families of gophers. Nowadays, the people get rid of these little pests by snaring or poisoning them."

The children did not know whether to laugh or be shocked by this story and I regret to say that they ended in laughing, for being still very young, they did not understand that in robbing the government, people also rob themselves.

"Well! Well!" exclaimed the nurse. "We really must not blame the gophers for eating grain because, after all, it is their natural

food. Besides, there are no earth-worms nor any potato bugs in these North-West Provinces, such as engage the attention of all little boys and most little birds in the other parts of Canada."

CHAPTER III

PONIES AND PICNICS

It was their grandfather who met them at the station the next morning with his motor car and drove them to the farm, where grandmother had dinner prepared for them.

And such a dinner it was! Billy and Betty were quite ready to declare that any one was foolish beyond understanding who did not live on a farm, and that there was really no need for cities, anyway.

Both children had their plates laden with roast chicken, green peas, new potatoes, and pie of sweet raspberries upon which was heaped thick cream.

During dinner, they learned that this farm was in the Qu'appelle Valley—the valley which calls.

"What does it call, Grandfather?" asked Billy.

"That depends upon several things," answered his grandparent, "upon your ear, your age and your ambition. After a while, you will be hearing the voice yourself and will be telling us what it calls."

Billy further elicited that the river which winds through the valley, and close by the farm, is called the *Wascana*, the Indian word for "a pile of bones," because in years gone by the Indians used to build fantastic piles of bones on its banks, those lands being the old stamping-grounds of the buffalo herds.

After dinner, Uncle Bob took the children out to the stables to become acquainted with the two Indian ponies he had purchased for them.

"Your horse, Billy, is a buckskin," said Uncle Bob, "and a pitching chunk of trouble,

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but I expect you to hold on and bring him into shape.

"Your horse, Lassie, has such an easy gait you can almost sew button-holes while sitting in the saddle. She is called a 'pinto' because of her mottled appearance."

"I think those big white splotches make her look exactly like a poached egg," remarked Betty, "but I like her very much, and think, Uncle Bob, you are almost as kind as Daddy."

The twins were also told they were to ride after the cows each evening with Alvin, the English boy from one of the immigrant homes, who lived on this farm. Sometime, when they had learned to manage the collie dog, the cows, and the ponies, Uncle Bob said they might bring the cows home by themselves.

Uncle Bob had given Alvin a calf which the lad was feeding to show at the provincial exhibition where prizes were given for the best calf fed by a boy or girl. Alvin's description



"THEY WERE TO RIDE AFTER THE COWS EACH EVENING."



of how the children go to the fair and parade in the ring was told with so much lure and color that Betty and Billy desired straightway to trade their ponies for calves. He also told how during their stay in the city, the country children were driven around to see the sights, and how the Lieutenant-Governor gives them a tea party at the Government House.

"That calf, 'e is always 'ungry, 'e is," confided Alvin to the twins, "'ungry as a sparrer, also 'e's a hatful of trouble, but I keeps fleshin' 'im up with chop and meal, and marster, 'e says, as 'ow I'm sure to win the prize."

When not riding with Alvin, or riding on the loads of grain, Betty and Billy were busy picking currants, goose-berries, and cranberries for grandmother to preserve, and sometimes they helped at shelling peas, picking beans or gathering eggs, although Betty was rather afraid of the scolding stiff-mannered turkey-gobbler who made such horrible noises in his

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throat, and looked as if he might eat her any time.

In the fields and gardens they learned the names of the different birds such as the doves, meadowlarks, plovers, cow-birds, hawks, woodpeckers, and once they saw an owl that said "Wo-hunk, Wo-hunk!"

In the autumn they saw the wild geese flying south in a "V" shaped mass, far overhead, and making a great noise. Their necks were outstretched; they beat the air with their wings, and followed the leader over what grandmother said was "an unmapped path." Indeed, grandmother spent much time with the children in their rambles through the fields, and told them many beautiful things about the golden-rod, roses, tansy, blue-bells, wild cotton, and the morning-glories which seemed to have their ears tilted listening to the conversation.

And their grandmother told them how these flowers were sown by a strong, unseen hand,

and also that God did not count the days spent out-of-doors.

Once they all went to a farmers' picnic that was held in a grove of trees some miles away, and where they watched the game called lacrosse, which is an old Indian game played with long-handled rackets, something like those used in tennis. The match, which was between the young men of the two districts, was exciting as well as very graceful.

"The point of the game is to put the ball through the enemies' goal," explained Uncle Bob to Billy. "The ball is manœuvered from one racket to another of the same side, while the others try to secure it. You are not allowed to touch the ball with your hands, although you can strike another man's racket with your racket and thus 'check' him."

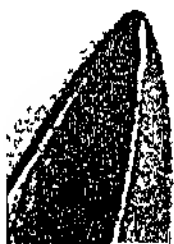
The most pleasant event of the day, however, was when the baskets were opened for supper. Betty helped to spread the white

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cloth on the grass, while Billy's efforts were directed to the building of a fire over which to boil the kettles. Such good things there were in the baskets, too, — roasted fowl, ham, veal pies, bread and butter, lemon and berry tarts, and cakes, of quite a dozen sorts.

As the family drove home in the quiet of the evening, the fireflies, who in the daytime have dainty business among the trees, flitted into the dark road and seemed to the children like lovely stars. Grandmother told them how the Indian children of Canada had this same idea about the fireflies, and had written a song about them, something after this fashion:—

Come little flitting, white-fire beast,
Light me your white-flame magic
You little star-torch.



CHAPTER IV

RIDERS OF THE PLAINS

WHEN harvest was over, the family decided to take the children to visit Regina, the capital city of Saskatchewan, so that they might see the headquarters of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, sometimes called "the Mounted," "the Warriors of Justice" or "the Riders of the Plains." This is the most celebrated constabulary in the world, not even excepting the Royal Irish Constabulary or the celebrated Arizona Rangers.

"We must really see the Mounted Police in training, now that we are so near Regina," said Mrs. Maynard, "and we will visit with Dr. Strong, who was the surgeon of one of their posts for many years, and who is now retired. He is a friend of your father's and will, I am

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sure, be pleased to show us the riding school and the other sights of the place."

"What do you mean by their posts, Mother? Are the police stationed at places called posts?"

"Yes, Billy! The official quarters and barracks of each division is called the post. It is the hub of a system of patrols reaching out over an area of a million square miles. If we had a geography here, we could see that they patrol the country from the American boundary on the south, right up to Herschel Island in the Arctic Ocean, where they have the most northerly detachment in the world. This island is the winter quarters of the American whaling fleet, and the police are sent there to keep order and to protect the rights of the Eskimos.

"On the East coast of Canada, at the Hudson's Bay, the Mounted Police have other isolated posts, and these form a net-work of patrols clear across the Dominion, till they

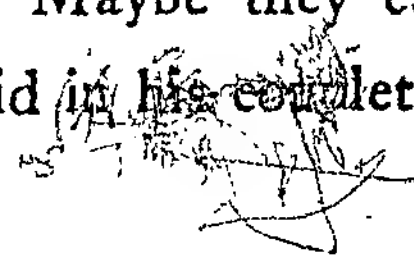


“THEY PATROL THE COUNTRY.”

touch at Dawson City in the Yukon. Sometimes, their patrol is on horseback, or with dog-teams, sometimes in canoes or boats, and often it is on foot, but wherever the patrolman goes he is honored and obeyed as the representative of His Majesty's Government.

"Sometimes, these brave fellows lay down their lives in pursuit of their arduous duties. A few years ago, a young constable, on patrol, was overtaken by a blizzard and died in the snow. The following spring they found his body and, in the pocket of his storm-worn uniform, a report to the Inspector of the Post, at the conclusion of which he had painfully scrawled these words:— 'Lost, horse dead. Am trying to push ahead. Have done my best.'

"These are the stories, son, which show the sense of duty, honor and gallantry of 'the Mounted.' Maybe they establish, too, what the poet said in his couplet:—



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Never the lotus closes,
Never the wild flower wake,
But a soul out on the East Wind,
That died for Empire's sake.

"How long have 'the Mounties' been in the Northwestern Provinces," queried Billy, "and why did they come at all?"

"The first detachment came to Winnipeg, or rather to Fort Garry, about fifty years ago," replied his mother, "and traveled westward across the Provinces which were then unorganized 'territories.' This detachment was sent by the Canadian Government to preserve law and order, and to advise the settlers who were then beginning to take up farms and build roads. Your father always said that whenever there was a problem in this country, the Mounted Police was the answer to it. At any rate, there has never been a lynching in the Canadian Northwest because the pioneers knew that justice would be meted out in the end, and that no matter how long it took, or

how hard the trail they followed, the Mounted Police always 'got their man.' "

"But what I want to know, is why they wear only red coats?" ejaculated Betty, "instead of blue, brown, or some other color?"

"They do wear other colors now although, formerly, they wore only red. I cannot tell you the reason though, but it is likely your grandfather would know."

Being appealed to by the children for information upon this point, that gentleman, who had just joined the party, replied that the Indians liked this color best, and so the Government ordered the soldier-police to wear red jackets.

"Did you ever hear of the great American writer who said he liked *any color so long as it was red*? No! well, this was how the Indians felt about the officers' tunics. They had heard the old warriors tell around the camp fires of the red-coated white men who had

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fought side by side with their fathers, and how these men had always been brave and honorable. White men wearing black coats, or any other colored coats would lie, and steal and cheat Indians, but men with red coats were to be implicitly trusted.

"In some way or other, they also associated this color with Queen Victoria whom they knew as 'the Great Mother,' and that her soldiers were to be relied upon.

"One of the rules of the force is that a constable must never shoot at a man, not even a murderer, unless the man shoots first. This might seem to be disastrous for the constables (or 'bucks' as they call themselves) but once a criminal is cornered by them, he usually gives in without ado, for he knows that, in the end, he will be taken and be more severely dealt with.

"At the time of the Custer massacre in the United States, a band of two hundred Cana-

dian Crees with 450 horses crossed into Montana, fearing punishment for their share in the rebellion, but they were brought back to the border by 'Uncle Sam's' cavalry and handed over to the Mounted Police.

"The officer in command of the American cavalry was amazed to find that there were only three men, one corporal and two troopers, sent to take charge of the Crees. "Where is your company?" asked the officer. "Here it is," replied the corporal. "There is another fellow but he is getting breakfast."

"Are there only *four* of you, then?"

"Yes, that's the number, but you see we wear the Queen's scarlet."

"Was there any trouble, Grandfather? Did the Crees come along with the Red Coats?"

"Of course, they did. They were escorted a hundred miles up from the border, and made no further attempts to visit in Montana."

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"But Grandfather, why are the Mounted men called 'Royal'?" asked Billy. "I can't understand that."

"They were given this title because of the gallant part they played in the South African War. The police did not go as a body but a large portion of the officers and men volunteered for service in the famous cavalry known as Strathcona's Horse. In the year 1900, Lord Strathcona, at his own expense, mounted and equipped this force in Northwestern Canada, and landed them at Cape Town, in South Africa. Some of these men traveled six hundred miles on the ice of the Yukon to enlist. Indeed, the men were recruited from a territory of over a million square miles. All these men were hard riders and quick shots, and had the fine staying powers known as 'sand.'

"One of them, Sergeant A. H. Richardson, won the Victoria Cross 'For Valor,' the dec-

oration that is more coveted than any other, by soldiers of the Empire.

"His comrade had been twice wounded and his horse had been shot, but Richardson rode back to within 300 yards of the enemy's position and rescued the fallen man.

"The Mounted Police fought once before, in the North-West Rebellion of 1885, and just now they are fighting in France with the Allied Army.

"When members of the Royal Family or the Governors-General of Canada have come to these Northwestern Provinces, the Riders of the Plains have acted as their escorts. Among those who came were the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, now Their Majesties, King George and Queen Mary."

CHAPTER V

THE WORK OF THE MOUNTED POLICE

DR. STRONG of Regina had been the surgeon of Police for many years and was now retired on a comfortable pension. He was what they called "a time-expired man," but he was still as active as any natty, straight-backed sergeant, and had a fund of witty tales. /

"Bless you, boy," he said to Billy at the station, "we'll let Grandfather and the ladies drive: young bloods like you and me must lead on horseback."

Billy was secretly very glad that he had learned to ride at the farm, for it must have been a terrible mortification not to have known how to rein his horse or, oh, horrors! to have fallen off.

He knew, too, that Betty was envying him,

and was feeling badly that she had to sit in the carriage. Girls have to take a second place, sometimes, no matter how clever they think themselves. They cannot always expect to get the privileges of "a real fellow, y' know."

After breakfast and a walk in Mrs. Strong's lovely garden, all the party visited the riding school at the Police headquarters where they saw the men practicing the musical ride, and the recruits being trained to stand at attention and to keep in line.

"The recruits or 'rookies'" said the doctor, "ride and drill, and then they drill and ride — but particularly they ride, till almost they feel themselves to be a part of their horses. Between times they are taught to drive several horses at once, to shoe a horse, or to take care of one that falls sick.

"Well! Well! they do other things too — that is to say, they are taught concerning the laws and penalties as set forth in the Criminal

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Code; how to brush and polish their accouterments; the rules as set forth in the Manual of the force and, above all, they are trained in marksmanship, an art that is wholly indispensable in open regions where a hunted man is apt to turn at bay. There is something so unreasonable about a gun, children, it speaks without evasion and terribly to the point."

"But what makes you a Mounted Policeman?" urged Billy. "How do you join?"

"When a recruit joins on for the required period of five years he takes an oath of allegiance to the Sovereign together with the oath-of-office which runs as follows: 'I, A. B., solemnly swear that I will faithfully, diligently, and impartially execute and perform all lawful orders and instructions which I shall receive as such, without fear, favor, or affection toward any person. So help me God.'"

The doctor further explained that while the 'rookies' or 'awkward squad' are disciplined

to perfection, their horses are also taught to stand under fire and to lie down while being fired over. Also, the horses are taught to ride where flags are waved and while Indian tom-toms are beaten in order that the horses may 'mind their helm' in any frontier encounter.

"It's out on the plains, though, that a man gets his best training," said a corporal who was explaining the manœuvres to them. "It is there he learns to read the trails and the weather lore, and generally to take responsibility."

"No, Madam, the work is really not so heavy," the corporal replied to a question of Mrs. Maynard, "because, you see, it keeps changing all the time. We are kind of soldiers-of-all-work. Sometimes we are public health officials, mail carriers, prairie and forest fire guardians, dog drivers, scouts, sailors, horse doctors, game guardians, patrolmen,

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telegraphers, canoemen, cooks, and again, we are kind of unpaid hired men to the new settlers."

"Ho! ho!" laughed Dr. Strong. "I can tell you ladies that we can also nurse a settler's family on occasion and bring the doctor to them in a pinch.

"And then when he arrests the head of the household for any crime, he may be called upon to chop a pile of fire wood for the stricken household, or even to supply them with food."

The corporal explained further, that apart from their decorative duties on state occasions, the officers of the Mounted Police act daily in the capacity of magistrates, coroners, explorers, timber agents, mining recorders and customs officials.

Long ago, when they first came to the Northwestern Provinces, they used to fight the rum-runners or "wolfers" who carried "fire-water" to the Indians thus causing the

red men to brawl and scalp each other. "For sheer deviltry," remarked the Corporal, "there is nothing to compare with an Indian who is drunk except — well, except a drunken Indian. In one year — it was in 1870 — among the Blackfeet Indians alone, eighty-seven men were murdered in drunken brawls by other members of the tribe, the whisky being supplied them by these degenerate white 'wolfers.'

"What else did 'the Mounted' do on the prairies? Let me see, — oh yes, they taught the Indians to abolish their tribal wars, and the practice of stealing horses from the ranchers on the American side of the boundary line. To 'run' a bunch of stolen horses across the border was considered by the Indians in no other light than that of a manly and gallant accomplishment. For this reason, it took some time and a very considerable patience to persuade the Crees and Blackfeet to desist

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from these alluring and profitable forays for the slower and more prosaic arts of horse-raising and agriculture."

During their stay of forty-eight hours at Regina, Billy and Betty heard many stories about the Mounted Police — stories of how the great Canadian Pacific Railway was built through this land, and of how these soldier-police controlled the hostile red men who feared the invasion of their domains; tales of gold rushes, splendid pageants, and of notable Indians like Pia-a-Pot, Almighty Voice, Sitting Bull and Poundmaker, but the one that most keenly won their interest concerned the bringing to Edmonton of the Eskimos who had murdered the missionary priests in the Coppermine Regions of the Arctic Ocean.

This is known as the Great Bear Lake patrol, and was the longest ever made in the Dominion — probably in the world — its entire length being nearly six thousand miles. The

time occupied on the journey was over two years.

Ilavinik, who had been a guide for Steffanson, the great Arctic explorer, was sworn in as a special constable and interpreter, being the first Eskimo who had served in an official capacity to His Majesty, the King. It was he and two other Eskimos who accompanied the murderers and the Police officers to the Province of Alberta, where the trial took place.

Two years later, the murderers were returned to their igloos of snow in order that they might carry to the far-away rim of the earth the story of the white man's kindness and justice, and in order that life might be safer for the missionaries and explorers of the future.

As the officers of the Mounted Police parted from their wards at the mouth of the McKenzie River and the Arctic Ocean, they presented Ilavinik, their interpreter, with a handsome watch as a special recognition on behalf of the

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Government of His Majesty, the King, for faithful services rendered. "The sun's heart,"

Ilavinik called the watch, and what more beautiful or appropriate definition could he have made?

And what better tribute could he make to the police themselves than when he said, "They are old ice, these young sons of clay-treaders, these ones from the far-off country on the edge of nothing where the earth ends. Strong ice are these sons, and putters-down of evil spirits. I, Ilavinik, the son of Tongwa, have said it."

CHAPTER VI

BEARS AND BUFFALOES

BEFORE going to Edmonton, Grandfather and Grandmother Maynard and Uncle Bob took the twins and their mother on a trip to Banff, in the Rocky Mountains, one of the Canadian National Parks.

The other park, Grandfather told them, was known as Jasper Park, after a fur trader who lived in the mountains over a hundred years ago when there was no other white man there. In this mountain is a Pass called the Yellow Head, so-named because the Indians used to call the trader *Tête Jaune*, or "Yellow Head," just as saucy children long, long ago used to call out "Red Head" or "Carrots" to passers-by. Perhaps, Billy and Betty would visit

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Jasper Park sometime but, on this occasion, they were going to the Banff Park.

On their way thither, while still on the prairies, the children saw several Indians on horseback, there being a Reserve or settlement hereabout. No white men are allowed to live on ~~these~~ Indian Reserves, except the Government's agent, the teachers, and the doctor.

"This is where the Blackfeet Indians lived," explained grandfather, "and they were great fighters."

"But why were they called Blackfeet?" asked Billy. "I thought they had red feet."

"They received this name, not because their skin was dark, but because their moccasins became blackened from the burnt prairie grass. When new, these moccasins were a light tan color, being made from the hide of deer. Because the Indians made no noise in walking, these were sometimes called 'the shoes of silence.' Nowadays, white people wear moc-

casins, too, when in the winter they go into the woods or for snow-shoeing or tobogganing."

At the city of Calgary, on the way to Banff, our travelers crossed over a river called the Bow, and Uncle Bob who also accompanied them, explained that these were the old ranch lands over which the cowboy carried a long rope and lassoed the horses or cattle by throwing the rope in the air with a wide circling movement.

"Were these the men who were 'broncho busters'?" asked Billy, "and is this where they branded the cattle with hot irons so that no one could steal them?"

"Yes, this is the very place," replied Uncle Bob, "here, and further to the south, where horses and cattle still run the ranges; but most of the land has been taken up by homesteaders who are raising grain, the government having put in large irrigation ditches, which water the land and make it fertile."

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It was after nightfall when they arrived at Banff so that the children could not see anything but the great towering mountains which surrounded the village, and the beautiful hotel on the mountain side at which they were to stay. Uncle Bob, however, told them that this place was the gateway to the mountains and Yoho Park Reserve; that there were many wild animals here which were preserved by the Government, and how these had become so tame that even the black bears came down to the village and ate food out of the refuse tins.

"Oh dear! oh dear!" cried Betty. "I hope they may stay away while we are here, I should be dreadfully afraid if ever they spoke to me."

It may be said here, however, that before she left this lovely place, one of Betty's greatest delights was to watch the little bear cubs in the park who wrestled with each other, boxed like boys, played at hide and seek, and worried their mother like little girls.

In the morning, the children and Mrs. Maynard took their baths in the enormous stone basin which is filled from the sulphur springs, as the water comes up hot from the earth.

Billy stood on the diving-board and plunged into the water, having learned how to dive while camping with the Boy Scouts last summer at the Lake of the Woods, but Betty refused "to take a dare."

Indeed, they all paddled around so long and accumulated so much sulphur that Grandmother Maynard declared she would only have to strike a match stick on them to have it burst into flame.

As this National Park takes in two thousand square miles, Billy and Betty were not able to see it all, although they were quite willing to stay forever, in order that they might; but they *did* see the buffaloes in the park, and red foxes, timber wolves, and the

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beaver which is the symbolic animal of the Dominion of Canada.

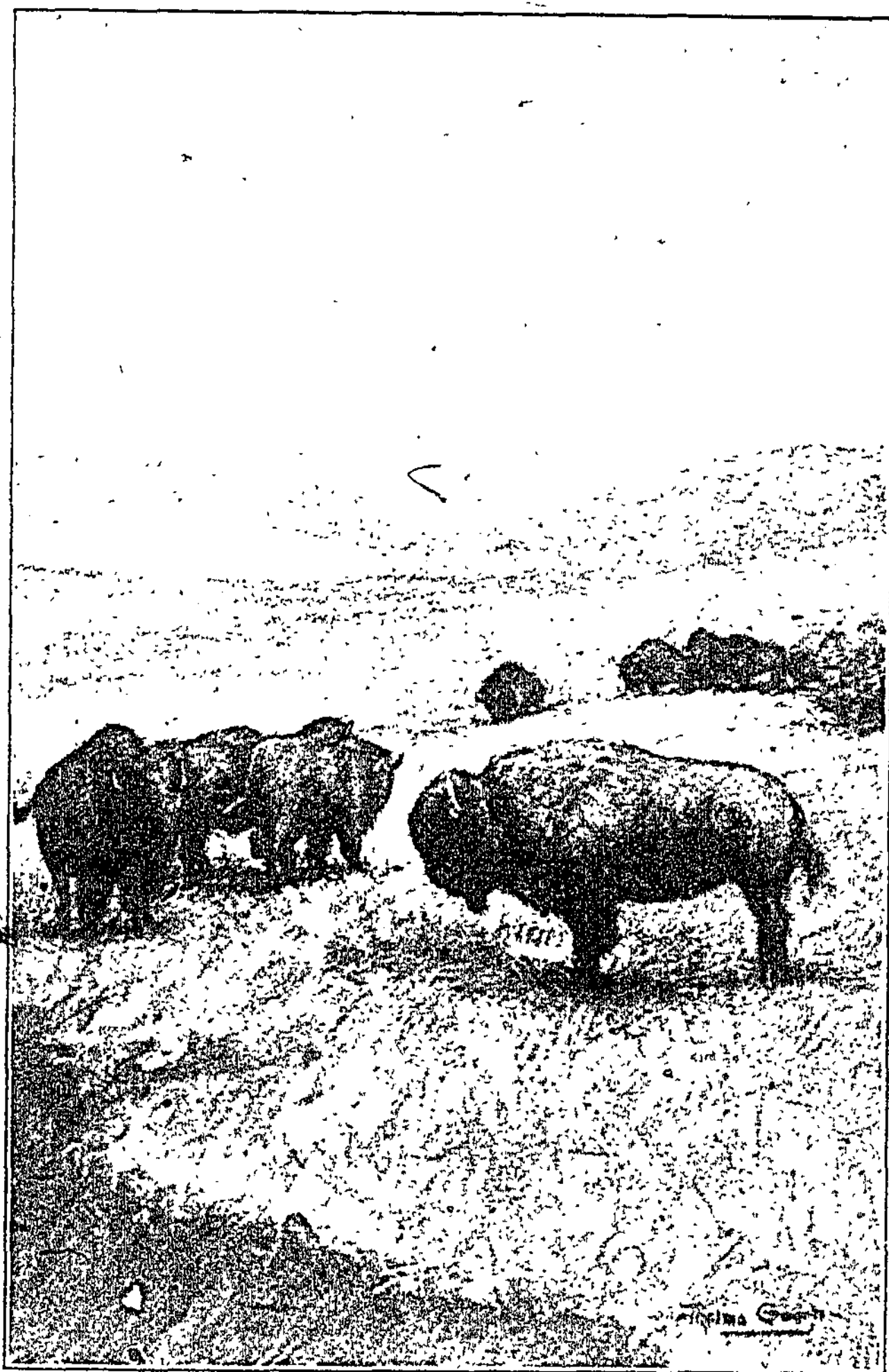
The timber wolves were kept in enclosures, and were very savage looking, one of these being nearly five feet long.

"In the northern woods," explained the keeper, "they are fierce and cunning, so that travelers are obliged to light fires to keep them from entering the camps at night."

When asked how he knew a timber wolf from the prairie wolf, the keeper said, "The timber wolf is of a gray color, with a nearly black back and carries his tail straight out. Besides, he is much larger than any other of the species."

He also told them how these wolves traveled in packs with a leader and that a great poet, noting this, had said,

"The strength of the pack is the wolf
And the strength of the wolf is the pack."



"NOTHING INTERESTED THE PARTY SO MUCH AS THE
BUFFALOES."



Nothing interested the party so much as the buffaloes with their immense heads and shoulders, and magnificent locks. Some of these animals weighed as much as two thousand pounds.

"I think the buffaloes' horns look like Christmas trumpets," urged Betty, and indeed, she was almost sure they were trumpets when she heard one of the animals bellow as he pawed up the earth for apparently no reason at all.

The guide told how long ago, when there were millions of these buffaloes on the plains of the Northwest Provinces, the Indians ate the meat for food; made clothes and houses from the skin; tools from the bones and horns, and used the dung for fuel, so that the destruction of the herds was a serious loss to the Indians and led to the tribes becoming almost extinct.

"Bless your heart children," said Grand-

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mamma, "and how could Indians be expected to go on living when they had no food, clothes, houses, tools or fuel? It is not to be expected. Besides, who would want to live under these circumstances anyway?"

On the following day it was Grandfather Maynard's turn to take charge of the bathing party, so they went to the natural cave, or basin, which is up the mountain side in a rock, and where it is almost impossible for any one to sink in the water.

On their way to the basin they saw the large trees called the Douglas Spruce, the bark of which is so thick that it protects them from being killed by fire. In a word, these trees survived when all the others died because they were not too 'thin-skinned,' a lesson, Grandfather said, which might well apply to people, too.

"Look quick! Look, Grandfather! What is that over there?" asked the children as a



little gray animal scudded by them in the twisted juniper bushes.

“It is what we call a stoat, or ermine. In the winter its fur becomes snowy white except for a few little tufts of black. This is the time the trappers take its fur so that it may be used on the robes of kings and queens because of its rare beauty and costliness.”

The children also saw a beautiful golden eagle as it flew from its nest, or eyrie, and soared far up on the mountain side till it passed out of sight.

On the last evening before leaving the Park, they all rode out on horseback to where there was a beaver dam, as Uncle Bob wished them to see the national animal at work in its home surroundings. When they arrived at the little lake in which the beaver lived, they got into a boat and their guide brought them to a place where they could look down and see the beavers building their dam. They also saw

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the poplar trees these animals had brought down from the woods in order that they might feed on the bark. It was thus that Betty and Billy learned for the first time the real meaning of the phrase, "to work like a beaver," and further, why no person who did not work diligently and store up provisions against cold weather could be considered a typical Canadian citizen.



CHAPTER VII

SHOPPING IN EDMONTON

BILLY and Betty felt very lonely leaving their grandparents and Uncle Bob, but the former said they must surely come back to the farm next summer.

As for Uncle Bob, well — he thought they were very fortunate to be traveling around the country with never a care, and with some one to buy their railway tickets. This is what he called “the glory of going.” He also taught them a song about it:—

My heart is warm with friends I make,
And better friends I'll not be knowing,
Yet there isn't a train I wouldn't take,
No matter where it's going.

At Edmonton they were met by Mr. and Mrs. Hillier, their Uncle and Aunt, and as

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Betty was very tired and sleepy, Uncle Fred, who was a very big man, and correspondingly strong, picked her up as though she were a little bundle and carried her to his motor-car, where Aunt Anna tucked her into warm robes of bear skins.

"Kidnapped, that's what has happened to you," chuckled Uncle Fred, "and your father need not come around claiming you when he gets home."

The children were delighted with the sleigh-bells, the clangor of the street railway, the brightness of the lights, and the quick movements of the people. Everybody seemed to be busy, and Billy thought they were like the *Guard* in *Alice in the Looking-Glass*, whose time was worth a thousand pounds a minute.

Mother noticed it, too, and said it must be the dry clear air, and the height above the sea level, that made the people so active.

"Maybe this is the reason," said Uncle Fred,

"but we like to remember here that all great nations are made in the north, and that victory has always run from north to south."

Billy had a dozen questions about this on the tip of his tongue, for this was a new idea to him, but their motor was now approaching the great stone bridge which is a mile long and which spans the Saskatchewan River, so that questions were forgotten in his admiration of the scenery on either side of the river.

Uncle Fred told them the Indian meaning of the words was "River of the Great Plains" and then, with a naughty twinkle in his eye, said the river was so muddy that sometimes, in the summer, you could see the dust blow off it.

Uncle Fred and Aunt Anna lived on the banks of the Saskatchewan River, in a wide, low bungalow with verandas and balconies from which you could look out over the city with its myriads of sparkling lights. The chil-

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dren thought they had never seen anything more beautiful, except perhaps the mountains in Banff.

As school did not open for a fortnight, the twins had time to go shopping with their mother and to visit the sights. One of the places they visited was the large department store of the Hudson's Bay Company, where they saw the beautiful stained glass windows with pictures of Indian Life in the Northwest Provinces, while it was still known as Rupert's Land.

It was upon the trade in furs with these red men, that this great Company had built up and kept their business for over two-hundred and fifty years, their dealings at all times being of the most friendly nature.

In this store, Mrs. Maynard bought Billy a coat of racoon skin, and Betty one of brown musquash, both of which were tied about with scarlet sashes. Nothing could exceed the de-

light of the children in donning their beautifully fashioned garments, and they strutted up and down before the mirrors like proud little peacocks.

Further, to keep them warm against the winter weather, their mother purchased woollen toques and gloves to match their sashes. Pulling down the toque, or cap, to show how completely it protected him, the salesman said, "With these suits, you can stay outdoors all day without Jack Frost ever catching you once."

"And go snow-sledding too," supplemented Billy, who was gently reminding his mother that it might be well to think of a coasting sled at the same time.

"The snow can come as soon as it likes," quoth Betty, "for I want to wear my new things right away, and all the time."

The children were disappointed on learning there was not much snow in Alberta till

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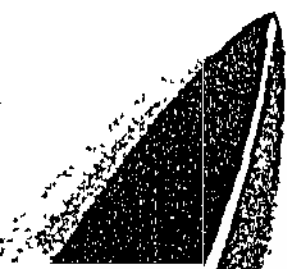
nearly Christmas, but correspondingly consoled when told that furs were very comfortable long before then.

That evening, Uncle Fred, in answer to their questions, told how nearly every person in this province wears furs in the winter time because, this being the largest raw-fur market in the world, pelts are comparatively cheap.

"Where do those pelts come from, Uncle Fred?" asked Billy. "Can we see where the animals are trapped?"

"Not very well, Boy. The furs are brought in from the great white forests that cover the land for hundreds of miles to the north. In the spring, the buyers came to Edmonton from the American and European markets, when they bid on the large bales or bundles of fur the traders and trappers have brought in with them.

"It is only a few years since all these un-



tanned skins used to be brought here by dog-train from Athabasca Landing, a hundred miles away. To that place, they had been brought up the great waterways; for you know the north is drained by five rivers, just as the Garden of Eden was. These are called the MacKenzie, Great Slave, Peace, Athabasca and Saskatchewan.

"Yes! Yes! these are really wonderful rivers, the Peace alone being two thousand, two hundred miles long, and navigable all the way except for two miles where it breaks into heavy rapids."

"But how are the animals kept alive?" asked Betty. "And how do the dogs escape being killed by the bears and wolves?"

"A fair question, little Lady," answered her uncle. "The chief food of the wild animals is rabbit meat, and when the rabbits are not plentiful the fur catch is poor. Up there, the interest is not so much about the bushels of

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wheat per acre, as in the middle and southern parts of the province, but about the thickness of the rabbit runs. Every trapper keeps his eye on Mistress Molly Cottontail."

CHAPTER VIII

IAN OF "THE FUR BRIGADE"

FOR several days after their visit to the store of the Hudson's Bay Company, the children asked so many questions concerning the Company that their uncle took them to call on an official who had come in from the far north to spend the winter at Edmonton. This gentleman, Mr. Hedley, who had charge of one of the trading-posts, called 'Forts,' was accompanied by his son, Ian Hedley, a lad about the same age as Billy and Betty. They had come south to Edmonton with "the Fur Brigade" to market the year's catch of furs.

This boy had never been in a street car before, neither had he ascended in an elevator. Telephones, moving pictures, and motor cars were things of surprising wonder. When first

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he saw electric lights, he asked how the fire had entered the bottles. Still, he was a very courteous lad, as are all official folk from the north who, in spite of their isolation, maintain a punctilio and exactness which the busy south forgets.

Ian was also well-read, but in books which were published as long as a century ago. These books, from time to time, had been carried down the rivers by the officials or by the missionaries, who almost invariably left the volumes behind.

It was Ian who told Billy about the trading boat which comes down the MacKenzie River once a year carrying the mail, as well as supplies for the posts.

"And what are supplies?" asked Billy.

"Don't you grow your own things the same as we do here?"

"We grow our own vegetables, but all other things are brought in. Besides, my father

must have goods to trade the Indians for their furs.

"Every spring the Indians bring in the pelts on sleds, which are drawn by husky dogs, and trade these pelts for whatever they need."

"Are husky dogs very strong?" asked Billy.

"Do they bite you?" asked Betty. "Have you got one?" asked the twins together.

"I have two husky pups," answered the Northerner, "these are half wolf-dogs and are cross with strangers, or if they are hungry.

"When the Indians come up with their furs in the spring, they carry their tent of skins, dried meat, a copper kettle, their traps, a gun, and things like that. And, oh I say, you would like to see all the boys and girls walking on snow-shoes beside their fathers and mothers. Nobody rides on the sleds but the baby, although sometimes its mother carries the baby on her back in a moss-bag. Indian babies are called *papooses*."

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"But what do Indians buy with their furs? If they carry all their stuff on sleds, they can't use much," remarked Betty who had ever a keen eye for the domestic side of life.

"Oh! they buy the goods which come in on the ship. The men buy cloth, caps, blankets, ammunition, shirts, tea, sugar, tobacco, flour, axes, knives and red paint for their faces. You see Indians are brown, and not red. They have to paint their skin when they want to make it red.

"The women buy print for dresses, kettles, needles, glass beads, thimbles, string, head kerchiefs, scissors and silk for embroidery. Father showed me how the accounts are kept, and how credit is given for a year to the Indians who have not had good luck on the trap-line."

"What kind of furs do the Indians get? Are there any bear or moose skins?" queried Billy.

“Oh! heaps of them,” replied the trader’s son. “Father gets the skins of beaver, bears, mink, wolves and wolverines. Some of the trappers call the wolverines by the name of ‘glutton,’ because they will eat anything but a frying-pan, and maybe they can chew a pan, too.

“Father also barter with the Indians for fox-skins, skunk, fisher, marten, ermine, racoon and wild cats. The wild cats are called lynx, and their skin is sometimes used to make the tall busbies worn by the British Hussars. Oh yes! and the Indians bring in otter and muskrat skins too. All these skins are packed in great big bundles and sent to the United States, and to Europe.

“Father says that when he took charge of the post, there were no steamboats on the rivers but just large scows called ‘sturgeon-heads’ and that these had, in some places, to be dragged up the rivers by men. The men

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walked beside the river on a tow-path and each man had a rope around him, the other end of it being fastened to the scow. He says this was called 'power o' men,' but if the scow went with the current, it was 'white coal.' "

Mr. Hedley explained to the children that "the Company" had been trading in Northwest Canada for over 250 years, and that the territory to which Charles II gave them charter, was larger than all Europe. This was granted in the year 1670, by the king, to his "Dear and entirely beloved cousin, Prince Rupert" who became the first Governor of The Company of Adventurers of England trading into the Hudson's Bay, better known as "The Hudson's Bay Company."

The idea was started by two French bush-rangers, named Pierre Raddison and Chouart de Groseilliers, who told Charles II that much money could be made by establishing trading-posts in Canada. Acting on this suggestion,



he formed the Company and made the officers to be Lords-paramount of "Rupert's Land," as the western territories were then called. This placed the fur trade on a commercial basis, and gave good government in all these regions. The headquarters of the Company are in London, England.

"How many posts or trading-places were there in this region?" asked Mr. Hillier.
 "There must have been a good many."

"At one time there were 134, but many of these have been abandoned. The first one built was on Hudson's Bay. I think it was called Prince Charles' Fort. It was a lonely time for the first men who wintered here, and one of them wrote in his diary 'that the earth seemed frozen to death.'

"Then the Prince of Wales' Fort was erected and had walls twenty-five feet thick at the base. These walls are now only roosting-places for the sea-birds of the Atlantic,

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but are among the most impressive ruins on the continent.

"Fort Chipewyan, at Lake Athabasca, is the oldest post now in use. . It was from this place that Alexander MacKenzie, in the year 1789, started for the Arctic Ocean, and that Sir John Franklin, in 1819, outfitted for his ill-fated polar voyage.

"These posts, or 'factories' as they were formerly called, are usually a group of log or frame buildings, and long ago, were surrounded by high wooden walls. Over each fort there floats the Company's flag — a red one with the letters H. B. C. — while above it floats the Union Jack, the flag of Britain.

"At Christmas, and other holiday occasions, many dances and feasts were held in the Forts, the 'Gentlemen Adventurers' and the natives coming in from long distances for the celebration."

Mr. Hedley, had with him the copy of an

entry in the records of Fort Simpson nearly eighty years ago, telling how New Year's Day was spent at the post, and he read this aloud for his visitors:—

“ 1838. *New Year's Day*. The morning was ushered in by a salute fired by our people at the windows and doors, after which they came to wish us a Happy New Year — and in return, in conformity to the custom of the Country — they were treated, the men with half a glass of brandy each, and the women with a kiss, and the whole of them with as many cakes as they chose to take, and some raisins. One of our gentlemen, who had a bottle of shrub, treated them to a glass, and after some chit-chat conversation they retired, firing a salute on going out. In the evening, they played blindman's buff, concluding the fête by a supper in the hall. I, also, gave each of the men a fathom of twist tobacco and a clay pipe.”

“ I have read this record not only to show

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how the holidays were celebrated up at the far edge of the world, but also to show the friendly relations of the officers to the red men. Indeed, 'the Company' touched these people on every side of their lives, and this applied to their white employees as well.

"They tell a story," continued Mr. Hedley, "at Fort MacPherson on the delta of the MacKenzie River, of a little girl whose lesson of the previous Sunday was being reviewed by her teacher.

"What punishment was given to Adam and Eve when they disobeyed the commands of God in the Garden of Eden?" asked the teacher.

"Without waiting to consider so simple a question, the child replied immediately, 'Why, of course, they had to leave the Company.'"

Mr. Hedley further told the children about some of the great men who had, since the year 1670, been the Governors of the Hudson's Bay

Company, among these being Prince Rupert; James, Duke of York (afterwards King James II); John, Lord Churchill, later known as the Duke of Marlborough; the Earl of Kimberly; Lord Strathcona, and the present Governor, Sir Robert M. Kindersley who is one of the tallest and most striking looking men in England.

It was this last named Governor who said recently, "The Company has good reason to feel that the people of Canada take some pride in an institution, most of the activities of which are carried on in their country, which has its roots in a remote past, and a record which is unique in the history of trading corporations."

CHAPTER IX

HOLIDAY SURPRISES

ALTHOUGH the British flag floats over the public school to which Billy and Betty went, they found *Little Cousins* from nearly all the countries in the world. All these, while speaking English, were still taught to love their native country and to cherish its history and traditions.

Apart from their studies, Billy learned to use tools and to make articles of furniture, while Betty learned sewing and simple cooking. They also played at baseball, basketball and the other games of the school.

On Sports Day, Billy and Betty were taken to see the students of the Alberta University run, jump, and engage in feats of strength. They also saw the library, the medical college,

the arts building and the residences where the students live. Most of the students were girls, for the youths of fighting-age had all gone to the Great War in Europe.

In the Parliament Buildings, to which they were also taken they saw the paintings of their Majesties, the King and Queen, as well as other things which interested them, and heard explained what a session of parliament meant.

One morning just three days before Christmas, Uncle Fred knocked loudly at their bedroom doors and called out "Sleepy Heads! Sleepy Heads! who is going to gather the Christmas tree?" No second call was needed and, all through breakfast, the children planned about the wreaths and ropes of greenery that were to be made from the twigs of spruce trees which grew in the country hereabouts.

All the family went to gather the tree, and the evergreen boughs, which Lee, the Chinese

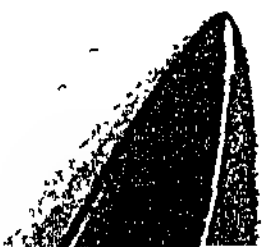
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cook, brought home in a sleigh. Mrs. Hillier told them the fir, or evergreen, is the tree of the Christ-child, and that when it is set up the master of the house should say, "Peace be to this household and to all the households of Canada."

On Christmas Eve, the children accompanied their mother and aunt to the hospitals, and children's shelters where they left baskets of food, toys, fruit, and cake as well as pretty cards and booklets.

It was snowing on Christmas morning and all the world seemed wrapped in cotton-batting. Later, the sun came out and shone so brightly that the snow sparkled as though it were sprinkled with diamond-dust.

After returning from church, dinner was served in the big hallway so that the family and all their guests could be seated at once. And such a dinner as it was! — oyster soup, roast turkey with strings of sausages, potatoes,



celery, corn, plum-pudding and mince pies with nuts, raisins and fruit in abundance. When "Absent Friends" had been toasted, and every one had donned a funny paper cap from the crackers they had pulled, the large doors were opened into the dining room where Santa Claus, in furs and bells, distributed the lovely presents which included a heap of gifts which Colonel Maynard had left behind, with instructions that they be not opened till this Christmas Day.

Afterwards, all the party went out to see the ski-jumping on the river banks, this being the annual contest for the city.

As they lifted themselves from the river bank, and made their wondrous leaps in the air, the children thought they looked like flying birds and both decided at once that, when they were large enough, they would be skiers too.

On New Year's Day, Billy and Betty were




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taken to see the ceremony called "the Blessing of the Waters" which was performed by the Austrian people on the ice of the river. All the while, little birds called snow-buntings hopped in and out among the priests and people as if they were helping with the ceremony too.

"These are hardy little birds," explained their aunt, "and sing in the coldest weather; but when the robins, blue-birds, swallows and other feathered folk come back in the spring, the little buntings fly away and leave us."

Much of the holiday season was spent by the children on the toboggan slides and one night they were given a party, it being Billy's and Betty's birthday.

A huge fire was lit on the snow, several trees being piled up in a heap with pine cones aplenty as kindling. To add to the celebration, the northern lights obligingly showed themselves in the sky, in curtains of flaming color. Truly





"MUCH OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON WAS SPENT BY THE CHILDREN ON THE TOBOGGAN SLIDES."

it was a great display of fireworks, and one which did not cost a cent.

During the vacation there were hockey matches on the ice, sleigh-rides, afternoons at the theater, and other wonderful things, but the most wonderful of all was the receipt of a cablegram from England to their mother.

At first, she was afraid to open it, and buried her face in her hands for she feared the worst had befallen her husband on the fields of Flanders where he fought with his men.

It was really Aunt Anna who opened it at last, and told how Colonel Maynard had been ordered back to Canada to raise another battalion, and would be in Winnipeg in a fortnight's time.

This was how the children came to leave the Province of Alberta, just when they had learned to love it so well, but still they were going home to Winnipeg, and to Daddy, so

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that their hearts were very light, their feet and tongues very nimble.

Happy Billy and Betty! Thrice happy Mother! Let all the *Little Cousins* send them love and greetings across the miles!

THE END

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